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## Community Comes Out To Support Sturdivant Again



Ronald Sturdivant talks to supporters.



Some of the supporters.



John Jennings, CEO, McDonald's Corp. of Charlotte, speaks at the rally.



By Ray Trent

Almost 200 people gathered at the Temporary Quarters Inn on Chapel Hill St., Saturday morning, August 7, to show support — in spite of the rain — for Ron Sturdivant, the African American businessman who is trying to purchase the hotel from NationsBank. Sturdivant has met with resistance from political figures in Durham. He has been living on the roof of the hotel for a week through storms, hot sun and whatever, to emphasize the unfairness of the drive against him.

Attorney Larry Hall, who hosts "Talk Back" on radio, a program covering many controversial issues, was master of ceremony for the Saturday morning community gathering. He told the audience that "we are here to move Durham forward with the community's help and to make this hotel a viable part of Durham."

Ms. Odessa Gatewood, chair of Establishment for Economic Equality (EEE), one of the sponsors of the rally, told the racially mixed audience that their presence there made a difference and served as a rallying point on all issues. "It's time to stop sitting back," she said. She declared that progressive development is for all of the people of Durham and everyone has a right to participate.

Curtis Gatewood, president of EEE, then told the crowd that "it is time to go back to the community. We hang in our own groups, our own churches and our own cults and forget about the problems that plague us all."

Gatewood strongly attacked the local media for tactics that racially divide Durham. "We will not tolerate it any longer," he said. He declared that racial division "runs through Durham in the school board, the courthouse, city council, and other places our tax dollars support." Many times during his speech, the crowd rose to its feet.

ASAP, the gospel group from Southside Christian Church, sang in the misty rain, "The Sun Will Shine After While."

Ronnie Jennings, founder of the Triangle Chapter of the Association for Minority Contractors — the other sponsor of the rally — warned that elected officials would be held accountable in November for their actions or lack of action. He questioned where they were Saturday morning because none were present at the rally.

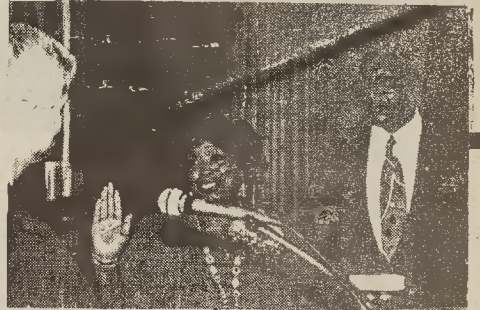
Jennings talked about how black contractors had "lost out on \$1 million in the last two years." He said black contractors were froze out of the arts center and ball park while a new jail is being built in Hayti. "Your picnic is over!" Jennings declared. Referring to drug sales, Jennings said, "When you take something from youth you've got to offer them something in its place. We need an economic base to offer them jobs."

Mrs. Diane Sturdivant described her husband as a Christian, a NCCU graduate, a loving father and husband who is business and goal oriented, a role model for this three children and the community.

David 2X of the Nation of Islam, said that "taxation without representation is tyranny and ... the penalty for tyranny — death." He said that "we've got to stop scratching where we don't itch when dealing with any kind of officials. We can't accept scared leadership any more."

Responding to the shouts of "Ronnie, Ronnie" from the standing, applauding crowd, Sturdivant, holding a framed copy of the Bill of Rights, read from it "the right to buy property without interference from government." He also had a framed copy of the Constitution of the United States and noted the 14th Amendment.

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'I DO SOLEMNLY SWEAR': JUSTICE WILLIS WHICHARD, SENATOR LUCAS, WILLIAM LUCAS

## Mrs. Jeanne Lucas Sworn As First N.C. African American Woman Senator

Story and Photos By Ray Trent

On Wednesday, August 4, Mrs. Jeanne Lucas, of Durham, became the first African American woman senator in North Carolina. She represents the 13th District. Mrs. Lucas succeeded Ralph Hunt who recently resigned from the Senate to take a seat on the State Utilities Commission. A committee of eight Democrats from the 13th District — which includes Durham, Granville, parts of Person and Wake counties — elected her unanimously.

She was sworn in by N.C. Supreme Court Justice Willis Whichard, as her husband, William Lucas stood by her side in the old Legislative Chambers in Raleigh.

In her first speech, Senator Lucas pledged not to be a problem, but to be a solution to those issues and concerns brought before the Legislature. She said her appointment is evidence that the door is open for people who are committed to serving all of the people.

## N.C. Association of County Commissioners Meets Here

### Commissioners Meets Here

Durham County is host this week to the 86th annual conference of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. The conference begins August 12 and runs through August 15 at the Sheraton in Research Triangle Park. More than 600 officials and their families are expected at the conference which will feature informative workshops related to issues of importance to county officials.

Gov. James B. Hunt will address county officials Friday, August 13, 9 p.m., at the opening session. He is expected to give an overview of his initiatives on behalf of the children, including early childhood education, and statewide economic development.

The governor's "Childhood Initiatives Program" has received statewide and national attention. Hunt will outline his plans, explain how they will affect counties and field questions from county officials.

The conference will also feature nine workshops on such subjects as solid waste, jail privatization, community corrections, statewide economic development effort and health care reform.

Orange County Commissioner Moses Carey will be honored at a special reception Thursday, 7 p.m., at Hayti Heritage Center on Fayetteville St. On Saturday night, Carey will be installed as the first African American elected as president of the N.C. County Commissioners Association. The Honorable Daniel F. Blue, Jr., speaker of the House of Representatives, will be the featured speaker at the Annual Presidents Banquet.

Conferees will have the opportunity to visit many of Durham's landmarks. The conference concludes Sunday morning.



SHARING A LIGHT MOMENT: SENATOR JEANNE LUCAS AND DR. JOHN H. LUCAS